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ABSTRACT

An overview of several countries' experiences in financing private elementary and secondary education is provided in this paper. The first section presents some general observations about government finance of private schools. These observations are drawn from experience in Australia, Canada, the Federal Republic of Germany, and the Netherlands. The second section examines finance arrangements in Australia, which has instituted financial aid to private schools gradually over the last 30 years. This section describes the evolution of Commonwealth funding arrangements, outlines the structure of current Commonwealth aid programs and policies, and assesses the possible implications of the Australian experience in financing private education for the United States. Such implications include the recommendation that an aid program should not benefit only private schools but should be part of a package benefiting public schools also. It is also recommended that a slow evolutionary approach to government funding of private schools be taken. (Author/JM)

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PUBLIC FINANCE OF PRIVATE SCHOOLS: OBSERVATIONS FROM ABROAD

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March 1982

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Abstract

This paper provides an overview of several countries' experience in financing private elementary and secondary education. In the first section some general observations about government finance of private schools are presented. These observations are drawn from experience in Australia, Canada, the Federal Republic of Germany, and the Netherlands. The second section examines finance arrangements in Australia. It describes the evolution of Commonwealth funding arrangements, the structure of current Commonwealth aid programs and policies, and assesses the possible implications of the Australian experience in financing private education for the United States.

Public funding of private education, particularly by the federal government, is a subject which provokes intense reactions in the United States. Most people are either strong supporters or opponents of the principle, with their views based on diverse value premises. Proponents of aid base their arguments on several grounds, including the value of choice. They argue that new forms of financial support such as vouchers or tuition tax credits will significantly broaden the opportunity for people to choose the kind of education they want for their children, especially people who are currently constrained by limited financial resources. Opponents of tax credits or vouchers cite concerns about equity, arguing that increased aid to private education will promote further economic and racial stratification in society and will result in the demise of the public school system.

A complicating factor in any discussion of aid to private education is the issue of constitutionality. In recent years, several state programs which assist private schools or parents have been overturned by the courts. Further, the Supreme Court's three-part test of constitutionality, which precludes "excessive government entanglement with religion," makes it unclear whether federal aid schemes which go beyond those already held acceptable under the child benefit theory will withstand court scrutiny. Proponents of aid argue, in essence, that you never know unless you try, while opponents basically claim that the courts have already decided the issue. In any case, the future for any new aid program is uncertain at best.

In countries outside the United States, in contrast, the experience with aid to private education is quite different. Most other countries in the developed world have provided financial support for private education for many years and currently fund private schools' operating and capital costs quite extensively. Furthermore, the issue of public funding no longer provokes widespread

controversy; the organization and finance of both public and private education has by-and-large been well accepted by the general public.

This paper provides an overview of other countries' experience in financing private education. It is organized into two sections. In the first section, some general observations about the finance of private schools abroad are presented. These observations are drawn from a number of countries in the developed world including Australia, Canada, the Federal Republic of Germany, and the Netherlands. The second section concentrates exclusively on Australia. It briefly describes the evolution of Commonwealth funding arrangements, the structure of current Commonwealth programs and policies, and draws out some possible implications of the Australian experience in financing private education for the United States.

PRIVATE SCHOOL FINANCE ARRANGEMENTS OUTSIDE THE UNITED STATES

Experience in other countries with the finance of private education suggests several observations that are of interest to policymakers in the United States. The first observation is that in most countries funding arrangements for denominational schools are generally of long-standing duration, while the extension of funding to non-denominational, independent schools is often of recent origin. In the Canadian provinces, denominational school funding developed with the British North America Act (BNAA) in 1867, while in the Netherlands, full financial equality between public and private education was achieved in 1917.[1] In contrast, large-scale public support of non-public institutions in England, which is primarily associated with the direct grants schools, began in 1945.[2] The Canadian provinces of Quebec and British Columbia initiated provincial grants to independent schools in 1968 and 1977 respectively. And farther from the United States, Australia enacted major funding programs for

both denominational and independent schools early in the 1970's.

Second, the arrangements currently used to fund denominational schools are the unique products of each country's resolution of the role of church and state in providing education. As in the United States, this resolution of church-state relations has been legitimated in the country's constitution or fundamental law. The experience of Canada and Australia is illustrative of the different paths that Western countries have taken in their constitutional development.

In the case of Canada, current arrangements are based in the colonial period.[3] Before Confederation in 1867, each colony in North America had already developed its own school system. In two of the colonies, Upper Canada (Ontario) and Lower Canada (Quebec), schools established by minority religious denominations in a district or parish, i.e., "dissentient schools," had been given full legal standing in the common school legislation enacted between 1841 and 1863. When the Dominion of Canada was formed in 1867, the BNAA, the parliamentary statute granting Canada a large measure of independence, protected the rights of those denominational schools then in existence. Each province continued to maintain exclusive jurisdiction over its educational structure, but under Section 93 of the BNAA, the Federal Government was charged with ensuring that minority denominational rights would not be infringed upon by any provincial government.[4]

With education established primarily as a provincial responsibility, each of the provinces developed its own set of funding mechanisms for public and denominational schools. Lazerson has classified provincial funding arrangements into four types, ranging from a fully denominational system in Newfoundland to informal arrangements in the Maritime Provinces and Manitoba. Until 1977, British Columbia was the only province that did not provide any funding for private

schools, but that was changed with the passage of Bill 33 in that year.

It is interesting to note some of the factors which produced a significantly different experience in Canada from that found in the United States. Lazerson stresses the political divisions in Upper and Lower Canada as central to this development.[5] With non-Anglican Protestants and Catholics fighting for their legitimate rights in Upper Canada and Anglo-Protestants seeking security against French Catholic domination in Lower Canada, the nation was steered away from a simple non-denominational school system and towards acceptance of legal protection and support for denominationally-based schooling. These divisions also created a Canadian identity which was quite different from the American. To quote Lazerson:

> From the beginning, Canada was held to consist of two societies, each of which had its own values, traditions, life styles, and language. Agreement on fundamentals was difficult. The creation of an ideal national type in which all Canadians could all strive to emulate, was impossible. The national preoccupation came to be with differences, not similarities, with creating a nation out of culturally disparate groups, not with establishing cultural uniformity. There could never have been "a new Canadian man" in the way that de Crevecoeur could speak of a "new American man."[6]

In contrast, Australia is a country which, until recently, was considerably closer to the United States in its treatment of private schools. After a period during the early nineteenth century when colonial governments subsidized church schools, "free, compulsory and secular" education laws were passed in all six colonies between 1872 and 1893.[7] With the passage of these acts, systems of government (public) schools were established and financial assistance to private and denominational schools was abolished. Further, when the Commonwealth of Australia was established in 1901, a clause modeled on the American First Amendment was included in the Constitution, which prohibited religious establishment. For over 50 years, this clause, Section 116, was viewed as a bar to the provision of Commonwealth aid to private and denominational schools.

Beginning in the 1950's, however, the serious financial problems facing non-government schools and the political pressure for their redress led the Commonwealth and then the States to adopt various forms of financial aid.[8] At the Commonwealth level, aid began in the form of tax deductions in the 1950's and evolved into large-scale, direct funding of capital and current operating costs in the mid-1970's. For the most part, the public opposition to financial support for private schools which was strong for most of the twentieth century was dissipated when aid programs were enacted.[9] By the end of the 1970's, however, as school-age populations stabilized and economic stagnation produced increased competition for public resources, a challenge to Commonwealth aid was brought in the Australian High Court. While this challenge was unsuccessful—a High Court decision in February, 1981 upheld Commonwealth aid to non-government schools -- the issue is certain to be politically salient in Australia during the 1980's.

Another observation about the finance of private education in federal countries is that, with the exception of Australia, funding is provided almost exclusively from state/provincial and local sources, rather than from the federal government. This situation is almost inherent in federal systems of government in which colonies or independent states with strong separatist traditions, and often with diverse educational structures, were merged into a larger national entity. The conflict over centralism and localism was resolved in these countries by division of powers among governmental levels, with education specifically, or by omission, reserved to the states.

As with issues of church-state relations, this resolution has generally been embodied in the country's constitution or basic law. In Canada, for example, Section 93 of the BNAA, granted the legislatures of the provinces exclusive power to pass laws respecting education, subject only to the rights

granted the Confederation to protect the rights and privileges of denominational schools.[10] Similarly in Germany, the Basic Law of the Federal Republic, promulgated in 1949, gave the Lander (States) the responsibility for structuring and financing their school systems. Article 7(1)GG provides that "the entire educational system shall be subject to State supervision."[11]

While the constitutional provisions in Australia are quite similar to those in other countries, Australia has proven an exception to the pattern of federal non-involvement in the funding of private schools, at least in the recent period. Since 1972, the Commonwealth has initiated a number of major aid programs for both the public and private school sectors, drawing on Section 96 of the Constitution, which permits wide discretion in making grants to the States for a broad range of purposes.[12] It was under this section that Commonwealth grants to private schools were developed and found to be constitutional in the High Court decision this year.

A final observation about public finance of private education is that funding for denominational schools usually parallels public school arrangements and is fully integrated with them. Independent schools, in contrast, are more often funded under different arrangements, although funding levels are usually tied to public school costs. There is, of course, great diversity in the funding structures across countries, as well as in the proportion of revenues for schools derived from different governmental sources. The Netherlands, for example, represents one extreme in that the full costs of non-government primary school operations is funded by the central government and all public and private schools are fully integrated into the funding scheme.

Under the Dutch system, the finance arrangements operate in the following way.[13] Public and private schools are entitled to a fixed number of teachers, depending upon the number of pupils. The central government reimburses the

municipalities (which operate public schools) and the private school boards directly for the statutory number of teachers, according to centrally-determined salary schedules. (Private schools are not allowed to supplement the state-paid salaries.) Other operating costs are reimbursed under central government grants which contain two components: a reimbursement per classroom for general maintenance costs, based on standard, rather than actual, expenditures; and a reimbursement per pupil for books, materials, other teaching aids, and the like. The funding of capital costs is too complex to be presented in a simple overview.

In contrast with the Netherlands, funding for private schools in several other countries is derived from both central and local government sources. While attempts to generalize may lead to some oversimplification, financial arrangements generally take one of two forms. One arrangement found in the German Länder (States) is almost as highly centralized as the Netherlands' system. Länder established service levels for professional staff and pay the full cost of these service levels from central government funds. Minor operating expenses such as building maintenance are financed by local governments from intergovernmental transfers, often in the form of a general equalization grant from the Land, local taxes, and, on occasion, from minor fees. Arrangements in Germany, however, differ from Land to Land and therefore can be discussed only in general terms.[14]

The second approach to funding is more locally-based. Local school systems establish service standards within centrally-determined limits, which are then supported partially from central government grants-in-aid, and partially from local taxes. The separate (denominational) school system in Ontario is characteristic of this approach. Under this system, grants to public and separate school boards are made for both "ordinary" and "extraordinary" expenditures at

the primary level through equalization formulas called percentage equalizing grants.[15] (Ordinary expenditures include all non-capital expenditures except transportation, board, lodging, and rental payments for facilities; extraordinary expenditures include the latter, plus capital costs and long-term debt charges.) With this type of aid system, the province pays a fixed percentage of costs for the school board of average property wealth, a higher percentage of costs for low-wealth boards, and a lower percentage of costs for high-wealth boards. The remaining costs are financed from the local property tax. Usually the province sets a maximum reimbursement level, above which public and separate school boards must fund their costs from the local property tax. Other special provisions apply for extraordinary expenditures.

It should be noted that public finance in Ontario is limited at the primary level to denominational school boards, the majority of them Roman Catholic. Independent schools are entirely responsible for their own financing and have no claim to direct aid from public funds. Furthermore, secondary schools are financed separately, with funding provided exclusively for public schools. This anomaly resulted from the fact that at the time of Confederation, the common schools extended through elementary education only. The BNAA thus did not freeze into place a system of separate secondary school boards; these were established after Confederation as an entirely public system.[16]

Funding of independent schools in Canada is a fairly new phenomenon as the previous discussion indicated. Quebec's program was enacted in 1968. Under the Private Education Act, financial support is provided for three types of education - academic, vocational, and handicapped - and for four academic levels: pre-elementary, elementary, secondary, and college.[17] The grants from the province to private schools eligible for funding are based on the average costs per pupil in the preceding year for public establishments of the same class.

An institution which is "recognized for purposes of grants" receives 60 percent of the base, while an institution declared to be of "public interest" receives 80 percent of the base, which is calculated by a complex process involving separate budget costs at each level. Institutions receiving grants may, in addition, levy tuition fees to raise their per pupil revenues, but per pupil revenue may not exceed 110 percent of the base. Some categories of operating expenditure such as transportation and capital costs for school construction and equipment are not included in the grants calculations and thus must be met from other than public funding sources. (This discussion is based on arrangements in place in 1978 and does not reflect changes which may have been made in the legislation since that time.)

British Columbia's "Independent Schools Support Act," passed in 1977, also provides support to private schools based on public school costs. Essentially, schools are classified into two categories, the first group fulfilling modest requirements such as existence for five years and non-discrimination based on race, religion, or ethnicity; the second meeting more rigorous requirements for curriculum, teacher certification, testing and evaluation. Grants are provided to both classes of schools based on the average operating costs per pupil of public schools in the district where the school is located. They are calculated as a percentage of average costs per pupil, multiplied by the number of qualifying pupils in the school. The second class of schools is, however, entitled to a higher percentage of provincial funding than the first, since it provides a higher standard of educational service.[18] For 1981, the percentages were set at 9 percent for Class 1 schools and 30 percent for Class 2 schools.

THE CASE OF AUSTRALIA

The preceding discussion identified some common aspects of public funding of private schools in countries outside the United States. This section looks at one of these countries, Australia, more closely.

Australia warrants separate consideration for a variety of reasons. First it is the only federal country in which major new funding initiatives occurred at the federal, rather than at the state/provincial level. Second, in the area of educational policy, the Commonwealth Government in Australia and the Federal Government in the United States have shared many similar concerns, foremost among them, equality of educational opportunity. Towards this and other ends, they have developed a range of categorical programs, including programs for special needs groups such as the disadvantaged, the handicapped, and limited-English speaking children. Third, in terms of their constitutional provisions concerning the relationship between church and state, the United States and Australia are probably closer than any other countries. The First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution provides that "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof," while Section 116 of the Australian Constitution states that "The Commonwealth shall not make any law for establishing any religion. . .or for prohibiting the free exercise of any religion. . ." While the Australian provision has recently been interpreted differently from the American, for many years the two were construed in very similar ways.

Some points of reference are needed to frame the discussion of Australia before summary observations can be drawn. These include: the size and scope of the private school sector in Australia; the evolution of Commonwealth education programs; the structure of current Australian programs; and the extent of public funding of private schools.

The Private School Sector in Australia

Primary and secondary schools in Australia are organized into three major sectors: government (public) schools, operated by state authorities in the six States and by the Commonwealth in the Northern Territory (NT) and the Australian Capital Territory (ACT); Catholic schools, operated either as part of diocesan "systems" or as separate schools run under the aegis of a religious order; and other non-government (independent) schools, most of which are also operated by religious groups. Denominational schools with the largest enrollments include those affiliated with Church of England, and several other Protestant churches.

The private school sector has traditionally comprised a larger proportion of school enrollments in Australia than in the United States. In 1978, non-government schools enrolled 21.2 percent of the approximately three million primary and secondary school students, with Catholic schools comprising 16.8 percent and other non-government schools 4.4 percent of the total. Non-denominational schools and schools without a religious affiliation represented less than one percent of school enrollments.[19]

Evolution of Finance Arrangements

Federal funding of both public and private schools in Australia is a relatively new phenomenon. The first modest initiatives in support of private schools were undertaken in the 1950's, as tax deductions on the Federal income tax. Direct Commonwealth support started in the 1960's in the form of limited, special-purpose programs to fund capital projects in both school sectors. By the end of the 1960's, however, pressure for more extensive funding of operating costs produced a collection of recurrent and capital programs, including a modest per capita grant to private schools.

The present Commonwealth role in funding both government and non-government schools derives from the work of the Interim Committee for the Australian

Schools Commission, appointed by the Labor Government after the 1972 general election. In its 1973 report, commonly referred to as the Karmel Report, the Committee recommended both a significant increase in Commonwealth funding for the schools and the development of a more coherent program structure, based on the concept of educational "need" to replace the ad hoc collection of aid programs then in existence. The programs proposed by the Committee underpin the current structure of Commonwealth aid to the government and non-government school sectors.[20] They are mainly aimed at raising all schools in Australia to acceptable standards and providing equal educational opportunity for all children.

Current Commonwealth Programs

Under current arrangements, financial assistance to schools is provided through three sets of programs: "Government Schools Programs," which are for use in the government schools exclusively; "Non-Government Schools Programs", which parallel those in the public sector, but are exclusively for use in the non-government schools; and "Joint Programs," in which both government and non-government schools participate. The first two groups of programs include: a grant for general operating aid (General Recurrent Resources Program) to raise the general resource base of schools; a block grant for capital costs (Capital Grants Program), to assist in the replacement and upgrading of school buildings; and three target-group programs, (Disadvantaged Schools, Special Education, Migrant Education), designed to provide supplementary services for low socio-economic, handicapped and limited-English speaking students respectively. The joint programs are all categorical in nature and support a variety of activities in a range of areas including multicultural education, staff development, educational innovation, and school level evaluation.[21]

Since funding for these programs was initiated in 1974, the preponderance

of resources has been concentrated in the block grants, rather than in the specific-purpose programs. In 1981, nearly 85 percent of the funds in the Non-Government Schools Programs were in the general recurrent grant alone.

The method of distributing general funds is particularly important. The Australian approach to funding general recurrent costs in non-government schools resembles the percentage equalizing formulas used by several of our States. Expenditure levels in government primary and secondary schools serve as the standard for calculating aid to non-government schools. For each non-government school or system, a Schools Recurrent Resource Index (SRRI) is derived in the following way: the resources available from private sources such as tuition, fees, contributions, etc., are divided by the total resources required for the school or system to operate at the average costs of government schools.[22]

$$\text{Thus, the SRRI} = \frac{\text{Private Resources Available}}{\text{Total Resources Required to Operate at Standard Government School Costs}} \times 100$$

In the period from 1974 to 1981 schools or systems were categorized into six levels, based on their relative resource levels, with grant payments for schools set at different percentages of government school costs. Those with lower private resource levels received a higher subsidy than schools or systems with high private resource levels. Table 1 demonstrates the principle using Commonwealth payments to non-government schools for 1981, with aid based on standard government school costs of about A$ 1140 and A$ 1820 per primary and secondary student respectively.[23]

Table 1

General Recurrent Grants Per Student
in Non-Government Schools, 1981

Subsidy Level	Primary		Secondary	
	Percentage of Standard Cost	Payment Per Student	Percentage of Standard Cost	Payment Per Student
1	16 %	A$ 182	15 %	A$ 273
2	20	228	19	346
3	20	228	20	365
4	24	274	23	419
5	28	319	27	492
6	35	399	33	602

For the 1982-84 triennium, some modifications were made in the recurrent aid program.[24] Beginning in 1982, the six categories were compressed into three and subsidy levels were modified. As part of the transition arrangements, it was recommended that schools and systems in aid Levels 1-3 move into Group 1, those in Levels 4 and 5 move into Group 2 and those in Level 6 move into Group 3. For 1982, subsidy levels were fixed at 20 percent, 30 percent, and 38 percent of average standard government school costs for Groups 1-3 respectively, but in 1983, grants to Group 3 schools were to be increased to 40 percent of average costs.

One point concerning the treatment of Catholic schools should be noted.[25] At the time the Interim Committee was considering the structure of the general recurrent grant, it was aware of the resource inequality and the unevenness of governance among Catholic parochial schools. Consequently, to promote a more equitable distribution of resources across schools and to encourage the professionalization of administration, the Committee determined that Catholic schools would be treated systemically for aid purposes, rather than on the basis

of individual school resources. Thus, average resource levels in all Catholic primary schools are compared with standard government primary school costs for the purpose of Commonwealth aid. This procedure will continue under the new aid scheme.

Magnitude of Commonwealth Financial Support

Public expenditures for primary and secondary education in Australia totaled approximately $A3.8 billion in 1978-79.[26] Expenditures by State Governments, which include indirect Commonwealth aid, e.g. tax sharing revenues, comprised about 82 percent of the total, while direct Commonwealth support comprised the remaining 18 percent. Non-government schools, with about 21 percent of school enrollments, received about 39 percent of Commonwealth expenditures and about 11 percent of State and Commonwealth expenditures combined.[27]

As a proportion of resources, Commonwealth grants represent a significant source of revenue for non-government schools. There are, however, important differences between the Catholic and other non-government school sectors. In Catholic schools, Commonwealth expenditures comprised about 45 percent of current operating outlays at the primary level in 1978-79 and about 41 percent of outlays at the secondary level; in other non-government schools, the proportions were 22 percent and 20 percent respectively. Resources from private inputs and contributed services showed the opposite pattern.

Summary Observations about Australia

Australian initiatives for private education have been marked by several distinctive characteristics. First, they have generally been incorporated into a broader scheme of assistance to both government and non-government schools. Even in the case of the tax deductions of the 1950's where parents of children in non-government schools were the primary beneficiaries of government aid, parents of government school children received some benefits, since primary

and secondary schools require parental contributions to meet a small portion of their operating costs. Similarly, the categorical programs of the 1960's and the Schools Commission programs of the 1970's had either government and non-government school components, parallel programs for each sector, or joint programs in which both school sectors could participate.

Second, large-scale Commonwealth institutional funding of non-government schools, with its focus on equality of educational opportunity, was enacted as part of a more comprehensive program to upgrade the general quality of primary and secondary education in Australia. The common perception is that equality and quality are conflicting rather than complementary goals of education policy. Yet the Australian approach to funding attempted to pursue both of these goals simultaneously. Aid programs included large block grants to both school sectors to provide the underpinnings of a quality education for all Australian children, but within the non-government schools program,aid was tied to government school costs and low resource schools received higher levels of subsidy.

Third, when the major private school funding initiatives were first enacted, the cost of the aid scheme was quite small relative to the total Commonwealth education budget, and the proportion of funds received by non-government schools was relatively low in comparison with government schools. During the first years of Schools Commission programs, the non-government schools received less than one-third of Commonwealth funds; the remaining two-thirds was in government schools programs.

These dimensions of Commonwealth support for private education suggest some conditions which appear to be essential for such a controversial aid scheme to be enacted. One is that the aid program not be perceived as an exclusively private school initiative. By incorporating non-government school aid into a broader aid scheme, it may be possible to diffuse the opposition

-17-

of potentially hostile interest groups and make the program more palatable to a broader public. A second is that benefits to the private school sector should not be seen as dominating the total package. By including private school aid within a large aid package in which government schools are the primary beneficiary, the visibility of private school aid is reduced and the possibility of passage is enhanced.

Another important aspect of Commonwealth funding of non-government schools is its incremental evolution over a period of nearly thirty years. It began as indirect assistance in the form of tax deductions, developed into limited categorical programs for capital projects, and emerged as broad-based general aid and special purpose grants in areas of national concern. In an area as controversial as government funding of private schools, an evolutionary approach is consistent with one's a priori assumptions about policy development. It is difficult for this type of policy to get enacted to begin with and it takes time for the policy to gain public acceptance. However, once programs have been enacted, they tend to develop a constituency for a more extensive commitment of public financial resources. Public acceptance of what was at the outset a small-scale private school funding scheme paved the way in Australia for more comprehensive and costly Commonwealth initiatives. Given the present scale of aid to private schools, it is hard to imagine a complete reversal of course in which government funding would be reduced significantly or totally eliminated.

Finally, the Australian experience suggests that there is not a causal linkage between government funding policies, and school enrollments, but clearly there is an interaction between them. The Schools Commission itself recognizes that Commonwealth funding policies have contributed to the growth in non-government school enrollments in several ways.[28] Extensive financial support for

capital costs has enabled non-government schools to acquire or construct the facilities to meet the demand for private education. This has been particularly important for Catholic schools which can now expend in growing suburbs. Further, the underwriting of a large proportion of recurrent costs has given low-resource Catholic schools the option to decrease pupil-teacher ratios and compete with government schools in terms of school resources. While ratios in the Catholic sector have not declined as rapidly as some had anticipated, given the large increase in Commonwealth funding, they were much closer to government school ratios at the end of the 1970's than they were earlier in the decade.[29] These reduced ratios have increased the attractiveness of Catholic schools as an alternative to government schools.

Final Remarks

The possibility that vouchers and/or tuition tax credits may be adopted to provide public support for private education and, over the long run, that there might be a significant increase in federal — and possibly state and local — financial aid, raises numerous important policy issues for the United States. These include the impact of funding on school enrollments, financial support of public schools, private school regulation, and national concerns about equity and social mobility.

In the American setting there is currently little empirical evidence on which to base policy decisions, as federal aid to private schools and students has to date been limited to participation in selected programs such as Title I of ESEA. Other countries have, however, undergone the experience of developing large-scale programs of support for private schools. Any examination of these experiences and their implications for the United States clearly requires some caveats. Nonetheless, it can be said with assurance that recent developments in British Columbia and Australia merit further investigation. The

experiences in both of these places are certain to provide useful information for American policymakers as they consider new federal initiatives to aid private education.

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24. Schools Commission, "Report for the Triennium 1982-84," (Canberra, March, 1981).

25. Interim Committee for the Australian Schools Commission. "Schools in Austtalia," (Canberra, May, 1973), p. 57.

26. Schools Commission, op cit) March, 1981, p. 213. The Schools Commission calculated expenditures in 1978-79 at $A 4.48 billion on December, 1980 prices. The $A3.8 billion is estimated at current 1978-79 prices, based on Schools Commission deflation factors.

27 Ibid, pp. 261-263.

28. Ibid., p.26.

29. Schools Commission, op cit., 1979 p.135 and Interim Committee, op cit, p.32.